

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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State Declares Air Quality Action Day

Unhealthy Air Pollution Levels Predicted for Wednesday

Concord, NH -- Air pollution concentrations are expected to reach unhealthy levels in **central and western New Hampshire (Belknap, Cheshire, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, and Sullivan counties) and at elevations above 3,000 feet on Wednesday, July 11.** State officials are calling for an Air Quality Action Day and advise all individuals in these areas -- especially people with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children -- to take precautions to protect their health.

The NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) expects concentrations of fine particle pollution to be unhealthy for sensitive individuals in the above-mentioned regions on **July 11.** Fine particles can cause adverse health effects in people with heart or lung disease and may also reduce visibility. The expected unhealthy particle pollution levels are a result of a stagnant air mass and transport of pollution into New Hampshire from surrounding areas. Conditions are expected to improve early on Thursday as a change in wind direction brings cooler and cleaner air into the region.

Fine particle pollution can increase susceptibility to respiratory infections and can aggravate existing heart and lung diseases such as congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, and bronchitis. When exposed to particle pollution, people with heart disease may experience chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, and fatigue. People with existing lung diseases may not be able to breathe as deeply or vigorously as normal and may experience symptoms such as coughing and shortness of breath.

The severity of the health effects increases as fine particle concentrations increase. People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Even healthy individuals may experience mild health effects and should limit strenuous or prolonged activities.

For further information about potential adverse health effects from particle pollution, contact DES at **(603) 271-4664.** For air quality forecasts and current air pollution levels in New Hampshire, call **1-800-935-SMOG** or visit the DES website at www.airquality.nh.gov.

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